

Testimony to 3/5/2013 City Council meeting  
From: Harry Shedd for Citizens for Sammamish  
Subject: ECA code revision markup

EXHIBIT NO.

CCb

My purpose in speaking to you this evening to introduce a transmittal from our organization that we believe is of critical significance to the process you are undertaking of reviewing the proposed revisions to our Environmentally Critical Areas code.

Citizens for Sammamish includes sub-groups that focus on various aspects of city government and community affairs – transportation, finance, etc. One of these is the Environment Sub-group. Members of that sub-group have been involved throughout the Planning Commission phase of the ECA update process. They reviewed the previous version of the proposed code revisions, called the Deliberation Draft, and submitted a mark-up prior to Planning Commission deliberations. That mark-up contained comments and recommended code changes reflecting significant problems the sub-group believed the code revisions did not solve. They have prepared a similar mark-up of the Planning Commission Recommended Draft, which was delivered to the city via email yesterday.

I wish to say that CFS appreciates the work the Planning Commission performed in producing the recommendations. The Commissioners had a formidable task. There was a mass of testimony to consider. Staff cataloged 281 so-called Exhibits, some of them consisting of sizeable documents and multiple items. And the existing code is roughly 60 pages of complicated material, not counting definitions of terms and other related sections of our development code. The Commission had to do its work in roughly two-hour increments every other week over many months. A challenging task for a group of citizen volunteers.

Probably *too* challenging. As can be seen from the Environment Sub-group's mark-up, several substantial problems remain unsolved in the current draft. I will not attempt to go into them this evening; the main message I wish to convey is that the product you have received from the Planning Commission phase is far from perfected. CFS believes there are significant issues the Council needs to consider in reviewing the current proposed code changes, and there is more work to be done to achieve an equitable balance between human and environmental concerns. The inequities in the code should be fixed now, not left to burden our citizens for years to come.

In its mark-up the Sub-group has recommended solutions to the problems – specific text wherever possible and conceptual in a few cases. CFS urges the Council to read and consider these matters thoroughly. And we stand ready to assist in whatever manner we can.

Ideally the Council should start by becoming familiar with the testimony that the Planning Commission received. Perhaps that is too big a task considering the volume of that material and the Council's many other responsibilities. But relying on Staff's portrayal of the issues as reflected in the Evaluation Forms will not lead to satisfactory resolution. Neither do those forms address all the substantive issues raised in testimony, nor do they faithfully convey the

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public's message in a number of instances. That this is the case will be obvious, we believe, if the Council compares the forms against the relevant testimony.

But there is a streamlined way to deal with this. The mark-up we have transmitted can serve as a workable alternative to digesting all the testimony. It shows where the problems are and how to fix them. And it includes hyperlinks to the relevant testimony. If the Council will focus on the comments and recommendations in the code mark-up, and, where more insight is needed, consult the Exhibits that are referenced, then the issues that need policy decisions can get out onto the table and be dealt with now. We urge you to do that.